



New York City _ A Tribute

“New York City’s anti-war demonstration on Saturday, February 15, 2003, will be remembered as one of the greatest events in the history of this city.”
(Vieques Support Committee, February 2003)

Why Do I Love New York?

... only because of your vast skyscrapers? ...your Wall Street market? ... your Park Avenue banks? ...

NO! NEW YORK, I LOVE YOU BECAUSE ...

ON FEBRUARY 15, 2003...

... millions of people around the world took to the streets for peaceful demonstrations against the impending invasion of Iraq, to resist the new imperialism. **Only one of those hundreds of cities denied their people the right to march: the City of New York!**

...BUT, NEW YORK, YOU MARCHED ANYWAY!

I LOVE YOU ...

... because, though you were herded into police pens,
though police barred you at every turn from reaching the demonstration,
though you were attacked with horses and pepper spray,
though you were rounded up and held in police vans,
and kept there freezing and chained together,
denied food, water, medicine for hours ...

YOU MARCHED!

New York, you arrived in your hundreds of thousands, and...

... to show you were not willing to give up your right to peaceful protest...
to show that freedom of expression will not be denied you
nor your right to dissent be squelched ...

YOU MARCHED!

Though you were stopped by the tens of thousands and herded up 2nd and 3rd Avenues,
as the you tried to get through to your brothers and sisters to rally at the UN...
though the police rammed their horses against those who were forced off the sidewalks,

PERSONAL ACCOUNTS

A retired infantryman decorated for wounds in action was at the demonstration with his wife and small children when... **“all of a sudden a troop of mounted police officers moved into the crowd, the horses high-stepping and moving their flanks to the side, and went through the peaceful and standing crowd, who were not blocking anything.”**

A 65-year-old woman reported: **“I was maced in the left eye and face by a police officer at 53rd Street and 3rd Avenue.”** She also testified being shoved into a pen, where **“another policeman refused to let me out to get medical help.”**

On 1st Avenue police used snarling dogs against protesters who tried to leave an overcrowded pen.

Another elderly woman in a wheelchair reported, **“We were herded into pens, like cattle. The police were a nightmare. A policeman ... started to yell at me, ‘What’s the matter with you? Didn’t you know there was going to be trouble?’ ‘No,’ I answered, ‘I thought this was America!’”** (NYCLU Testimony, NY City Council, Feb. 25, 2003)

YOU KEPT MARCHING, NEW YORK!

... and filling the space between 3rd Avenue and the East River,
from the sixties down to the thirties, you united your voices
to the tens of millions heard around the world that day,
from Madrid to Buenos Aires to Sydney,...
... and filling the air with your one clear shout, you cried:
“We don’t want your war, Washington!”

And in spite of a sold-out media that tried to hide your numbers,
your voice, New York, could not be stifled:
“Don’t spill the innocent blood of children in our name...!”

New York, I love you because, despite freezing weather,
...despite an “orange alert” to scare you into staying home,

YOU MARCHED ...

And you let your voice be heard, your **true** voice – **America’s** voice.

You let the world know what **AMERICA** means...
...that America is **bigger** than her “spacious skies”...
... that America is **more bountiful** than her “amber waves of grain”
and even **more beautiful** her “purple mountain majesties”...
... that America is as **wide as her “heart is wide”!**
... that to be **AMERICAN** goes beyond citizenship,
...beyond country,
...beyond even hemisphere.

Because you let the world know that to be American means no more or less than to be **HUMAN**.



New York, I love you!

Now is the time for New Yorkers to get moving again. Here are two things YOU can do:

... On **Saturday March 20, 2004**, New York will once more join a global protest against the on-going war and US occupation in Iraq, sponsored by United for Peace and Justice. ***Join the march!***

... **Ask your County Legislator to support the resolution to defend our civil liberties** from the USA PATRIOT Act. **Postcards and petitions** to County Legislators are available for you to sign; Visit www.rocklandaction.org to download a petition form, or pickup at the vigil in Nanuet.

***New York, you will fight for democracy at home because you are
“a place where people can – and do – talk with their feet!”***

Join **Rockland Coalition for Peace and Justice** for **weekly peace vigils** at Middletown Rd. & Rt. 59 in Nanuet, **every Saturday** 1-3 pm. For info: www.rocklandaction.org or call the Fellowship of Reconciliation at 358-4601.